



December 1, 2014

Dear Members of the European Parliament,

The “Luxembourg leaks” scandal and recent inquiries by the European Commission have brought home the enormously damaging scale of tax avoidance within the European Union which has been facilitated by the tax laws and rulings of EU member states.

As European non-governmental organisations working for greater justice in the tax system in Europe and around the world, we strongly support the proposal which is circulating for the creation of a Committee of Inquiry by the European Parliament to investigate alleged contraventions and maladministration in the application of EU law in relation to tax rulings and similar measures by Member States, and to make any recommendations deemed necessary for action against aggressive tax planning.

The problem of corporate tax avoidance is not only costing EU member states billions of euros in badly-needed tax revenues. It also drains essential funds out of developing countries which could otherwise be spent by their governments on healthcare, schools and other public services which are vital to the fight against poverty.

Rising public anger against tax avoidance makes it essential that the European Parliament be seen to take the strongest possible measures to counter the problem. A clear political signal needs to be sent to both the European Commission and the Member States that Parliamentarians will hold them into account and will investigate alleged cases of breach of the law to make strong recommendations for future reforms.

An inquiry committee is a necessary first step towards wider reform and we strongly urge all Members of the European Parliament to support it. We believe that any lesser step, such as an initiative report by an existing committee, would not be seen as sufficiently robust to address the huge scale of the problem.

Yours sincerely

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